

BONE REPLACEMENT MATERIAL WITH ORTHOPHOSPHATE

Technical field of the invention

[0001] The present invention relates to a material comprising orthophosphate and having a high solubility which can be used both as a bioactive bone replacement material, e.g. in the form of a spongiosa-like material, a coating applied onto metallic prosthesis sticks by thermal spraying or by rf sputtering, and as a substrate material in biotechnology, especially in tissue engineering, e.g. in the form of a ceramic sheet or of a compact or porous, i.e. spongiosa-like, scaffold-like, moulded body. The invention also relates to a manufacturing method.

Background of the invention

[0002] In principle, inorganic materials which are easily resorbed are known. Materials which are specifically used as bioactive bone replacement materials and dissolve quickly have also been described in the relevant literature. For example, there have been numerous publications dedicated to the successful clinical use of ceramic materials the main crystal phases of which are alpha- or beta-tricalcium phosphate (TCP). In addition, there have been comparative analyses of these two TCP phases using animal tests. It is known from EP 237043 that granulated materials made of alpha-TCP contain dicalcium phosphate on their surface, whose solubility was higher than that of the pure alpha-PCT core material, especially in the initial phase following an implantation.

[0003] The chemical solubility of the aforesaid granulated materials was surpassed by other bioactive materials based on calcium phosphates which in addition contain oxides of potassium, sodium, magnesium and/or silicon (EP 541564 B1) and the glassy-crystalline material of which is based on the following main crystal phases: Phase X, rhenanite, phase according to Ando (Phase A) and/or mixed crystals derived from the aforesaid phases in between these crystal phases.

Summary of the invention

[0004] The object of the invention is to provide a new material comprising ortho-

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phosphate which comprises further phosphates and enables a substantially direct joining of bones without connective tissue and/or the ex vivo cultivation of bone cells, and which dissolves in contact with bone tissue, and which at the same time has solubilities which are adjustable in a more precise manner and, in the case of composite materials, coefficients of expansion adapted to certain metals. Another object of the invention is to provide a method for manufacturing the aforesaid material.

Detailed description of the invention

[0005] According to the invention, the bone replacement material comprises:

- a) according to ^{31}P -NMR measurements, Q_0 -groups of orthophosphate and Q_1 -groups of diphosphate, the orthophosphates or Q_0 -groups making up 65 to 99.9% by weight relative to the total phosphorus content of the finished material and the diphosphates or Q_1 -groups making up 0.1 to 35% by weight relative to the total phosphorus content of the finished material, and
- b) according to X-ray diffractometric measurements and relative to the total weight of the finished material, 35 to 99.9% by weight of a main crystal phase consisting of $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$, $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$, mixtures thereof or mixed crystals according to the general formula $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}_x\text{Na}_{1-x}(\text{PO}_4)_7$, where $x = 0$ to 1 , and 0.1 to 25% by weight of a substance selected from the group consisting of $\text{Na}_2\text{CaP}_2\text{O}_7$, $\text{K}_2\text{CaP}_2\text{O}_7$, $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ and mixtures thereof as a secondary crystal phase, and
- c) X-ray amorphous phases contained besides the main crystal phase which jointly make up 0.1 to 65% by weight relative to the total weight of the finished material.

[0006] Preferably, x ranges between 0.1 and 1, particularly 0.2 and 1.

[0007] In addition, the secondary crystal phase or the amorphous phase preferably contain one or more substances from the group consisting of $\beta\text{-Ca}_3(\text{PO}_4)_2$, $\text{Ca}_2\text{K}_{1-x}\text{Na}_{1+x}(\text{PO}_4)_2$ ($x = 0.1-1$), CaNaPO_4 , NaPO_3 , KPO_3 and mixed crystals thereof, the chain phosphates NaPO_3 and KPO_3 being detectable as Q_2 -groups according to ^{31}P -NMR measurements and the orthophosphates being detectable as Q_0 -groups according to ^{31}P -NMR measurements.

[0008] Further, the secondary phase may contain a silicate phase in an amount ranging up to 6% by weight, corresponding to the SiO_2 content.

[0009] In mixed crystals contained in the aforesaid main crystal phase and in the constituents of the secondary crystal phase, the element Ca may be replaced by Mg in an amount ranging up to 10% by weight relative to the weight of the finished material.

[00010] The orthophosphate phase represented by Q_0 -groups preferably makes up 40 to 95% by weight, particularly 50 to 90% by weight.

[00011] The diphosphate phase represented by Q_1 -groups preferably makes up 1 to 22% by weight, particularly 5 to 8% by weight.

[00012] The composition of the material according to the invention which is based on CaO, P_2O_5 , Na_2O , K_2O and optionally MgO and SiO_2 and which is to be regarded as X-ray amorphous-crystalline ranges between (in % by weight):

35 and 55 P_2O_5 ; 30 and 50 CaO;

1 and 12 Na_2O ; 0.5 and 15 K_2O ;

0 and 5 MgO, preferably 0.1-5 MgO;

0 and 5 SiO_2 ; MgO or SiO_2 or a mixture thereof making up at

least 1% by weight.

[00013] The composition comprises the aforesaid phases as main crystal phases and one or more constituents from the group consisting of $\text{Na}_2\text{CaP}_2\text{O}_7$, $\text{K}_2\text{CaP}_2\text{O}_7$, $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$, $\beta\text{-Ca}_3(\text{PO}_4)_2$, $\text{Ca}_2\text{K}_{1-x}\text{Na}_{1+x}(\text{PO}_4)_2$, where $x = 0.1-0.9$, CaNaPO_4 , NaPO_3 and KPO_3 as crystalline secondary constituents as well as an X-ray amorphous phase.

[00014] A preferred material contains the following constituents (in % by weight): 43 to 55 P_2O_5 , 32 to 48 CaO, 1.5 to 11 Na_2O , 1.5 to 12 K_2O , 0.5 to 2 MgO, 0.0 to 2 SiO_2 . A special preferred embodiment contains 44 to 54 P_2O_5 , 34 to 48 CaO, 1.5 to 10.5 Na_2O ,

1 to 11 K₂O, 1.5 to 3 MgO, 0.1 to 4 SiO₂.

[00015] In general, the term "X-ray amorphous" material used herein cannot be clearly defined. "X-ray amorphous" as used herein refers to a material whose structure cannot be determined using standard XRD (X-ray diffractometry) and which can therefore be called X-ray amorphous. The undetectable areas can be very small organized areas (micro-crystalline) as well as statistically unorganized areas. Unlike XRD, the ³¹P-NMR results can be used to detect the existence of any crystalline phase. Therefore quantitative estimates based on NMR and XRD results can be rather different. This phenomenon seems to be particularly true of the diphosphate and chain phosphate contents; as a rule, ³¹P-NMR measurements yield considerably higher contents than XRD and in some cases no contents at all of crystalline parts of the last mentioned phosphates are found using XRD. This impressively shows why ³¹P-NMR measurements are an essential prerequisite for characterizing and finally manufacturing the materials according to the invention. XRD measuring with PW 1710, Philipps, NL (CuK radiation).

[00016] Both crystalline and X-ray amorphous phases can therefore be provided in a thoroughly mixed state. It is of no importance for the present invention whether one phase is located adjacent to the other or one phase encloses the other. The term "main crystal phase" as used herein refers to a crystalline phase which is detected using X-ray diffraction and is contained in at least twice the amount of a secondary phase, concentrations of 25% and below, preferably below 15% by weight, being referred to as secondary phases.

[00017] Surprisingly, it has been found, that a high solubility can be achieved by means of the main phases Ca₁₀Na(PO₄)₇, Ca₁₀K(PO₄)₇ and K-Na ratios in between according to the aforesaid formulas (orthophosphates) and by the secondary phases Na₂CaP₂O₇, K₂CaP₂O₇ and Ca₂P₂O₇ (diphosphates), i.e. that relatively small alkali contents bring about the same effect as described in the relevant literature for compositions containing solely Ca₂KNa(PO₄)₂. In addition, an increasing substitution of

potassium by sodium does not lead to an abrupt phase transition as in the case of $\text{Ca}_2\text{KNa}(\text{PO}_4)_2$, which inevitably changes into $\text{Ca}_5\text{Na}_2(\text{PO}_4)_4$, but the only effect is a change in the amounts of the $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ and $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ phases and/or the mixed crystals according to the general formula $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}_x\text{Na}_{1-x}(\text{PO}_4)_7$, where $x = 0-1$, which may have formed in between these substances, without any abrupt phase transition.

[00018] Preferably, x ranges between 0.1 and 1, particularly 0.2 and 1.

[00019] Further, it has surprisingly been found that the main crystal phases $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ and $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ and K-Na ratios in between can be unequivocally characterized by means of ^{31}P -NMR measurements and that in contrast to the X-ray diffractometric method used so far [XRD files: PDF-2 (1996) 450339 and 450138; Zh.Neoorg.Khim., 33(1988)73, including the instructions for preparing $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ and $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ contained therein] no confusion with or problems regarding the identification of the beta-TCP phase can occur. The presence of the main crystal phases according to the invention also accounts for the much higher solubility of these glassy-crystalline materials compared to alpha- and/or beta-TCP.

[00020] The ^{31}P -NMR measurements, which were carried out using a superconductive Fourier NMR spectrometer known as Avance DMX400 WB and manufactured by Bruker BioSpin GmbH (Germany), also showed that the material preferably consists of 65 to 99.9 orthophosphate of calcium and in some cases orthophosphate of sodium, potassium and magnesium, wherein the aforesaid orthophosphate content is determined using ^{31}P -NMR measurements (Q_0 -groups) and refers to crystalline and/or X-ray amorphous material in its entirety, 0.1 to 35% diphosphate of calcium and in some cases diphosphate of sodium, potassium and magnesium, wherein the aforesaid diphosphate content is determined using ^{31}P -NMR measurements (Q_1 -groups) and refers to crystalline and/or amorphous material in its entirety, 0 to 15% chain phosphate of sodium and/or potassium, wherein the aforesaid chain phosphate content is determined using ^{31}P -NMR measurements (Q_2 -groups) and refers particularly to X-ray amorphous and, as the case may be, micro-crystalline material in its entirety. In

addition, 0 to 10% of a silicate phase may be contained, depending upon the amount of SiO_2 added.

[00021] Further, it has surprisingly been found that the desired effect, i.e. a considerably improved solubility, is brought about by the presence of diphosphates and/or chain phosphates, preferably diphosphates, as will be demonstrated in Example 4. In contrast to the alpha-TCP having an outer layer of dicalcium phosphate, which is mentioned in the section describing the state of the art, all diphosphates of the material according to the invention are "thoroughly mixed" with the other phase constituents, i.e. the phase does not have a layered structure, which brings about a high solubility or even enables the complete disappearance or biodegradation of the material.

[00022] The diphosphate contents result from a comparatively high phosphate content relative to the other constituents. The aforesaid phosphate content could also be the reason why the compositions according to the invention melt very easily yielding a rather fluid melt compared to known resorbable materials.

[00023] Further, it has surprisingly been found that due to the presence of diphosphates the ion discharge behaviour of the material (the glassy-crystalline material), which in the beginning shows a strong alkaline reaction, changes more pronouncedly towards physiological pH values (7.4) than that of materials not containing diphosphate, provided the material was stored in deionized water. Due to this shift in pH values, the material is also of interest to biotechnology, in particular to tissue engineering.

[00024] The aforesaid feature can be enhanced by boiling the (compact or open-pore) moulded bodies in deionized water (37-90°C) and optionally at a pressure ranging up to 10 bars thus leaching their surface so that the material or moulded body treated in this way has considerably lower pH values once the treatment is finished. This phenomenon could be put down to a reduction of the alkaline ions in the area near the surface of the material. Such an embodiment of the invention is preferred.

[00025] Another feature of the material according to the invention consists in that its solubility can be adjusted within relatively wide ranges, depending upon the selected composition; specifically, the total solubility can range between 60 and 250 μ g/mg relative to the starting material if the test is carried out in 0.2M TRIS-HCl buffer solution at pH = 7.4, T = 37°C using a grain size fraction of 315-400 μ m, the duration of the test being 120h and the ratio of weighed-in sample to buffer solution being 50mg to 40ml.

[00026] Another feature of the material consists in that it can be ground more finely than materials containing solely Ca₂KNa(PO₄)₂ as main crystal phase under the same grinding conditions (Pulverizette 5 manufactured by Frisch GmbH, ZrO₂ grinding bowl) [described in: Biomaterials 16 (1995)1241-1248]. The aforesaid feature, which may be due to a high content of X-ray amorphous substances, is of particular importance if the material is to be processed into spongiosa-like bodies.

[00027] According to the invention, the material is manufactured by combining the substances suitable for preparing the mixture to be melted, their concentrations being in the range of 35-55% by weight CaO, 30-50% by weight P₂O₅, 1-12% by weight Na₂O, 0.5-15% by weight K₂O and 0-5% by weight MgO and optionally up to 5% by weight SiO₂, MgO or SiO₂ or a mixture thereof making up at least 1% by weight, and melting the mixture at between 1,550 and 1,650°C in a suitable crucible material, e.g. consisting of a Pt/Rh alloy, using multistage thermal treatment programmes (holding stages in the range between 200 and 1,500°C, namely 1-2h at 350-450°C, 750-850°C and 950-1,050°C, e.g. 1h at 400, 800 and 1,000°C respectively or e.g. 1h at 800°C and 1h at 950°C). The melt may be held at the melting temperature for between 20 and 60min. The melt is then poured and once the mass has solidified it is cooled down to room temperature in air (spontaneous cooling) or in a cooling furnace using a temperature-controlled cooling process, e.g. at a rate of 1 to 20 degrees/min, depending upon its intended use. A spontaneous crystallization process takes place while the melt cools down. The mixture to be melted may comprise oxides, carbonates, hydrogen phosphates and/or ortho-phosphoric acid. The ³¹P-NMR measurements yield different spectra allowing conclusions

as to the raw materials used or indicating small amounts of iron oxides or manganese oxides contained therein.

[00028] Preferred melting temperatures range between 1,590 and 1,650°C.

[00029] Once the material has cooled down, it is e.g. ground, mixed with commonly used sintering aids and isostatically pressed into moulded bodies in order to obtain a densely fired ceramic body after sintering.

[00030] Alternatively, the material manufactured according to the invention can e.g. be ground, mixed with commonly used sintering aids and processed into a slurry which is then applied onto a polyurethane sponge and sintered in several sintering stages at such high temperatures that the polyurethane sponge and the sintering aids are burnt completely and a spongiosa-like body is obtained the main crystalline constituents of which are $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$, $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ and in some cases mixed crystals in between these two phases as well as $\text{Na}_2\text{CaP}_2\text{O}_7$, $\text{K}_2\text{CaP}_2\text{O}_7$ and $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$.

[00031] In a particularly preferred embodiment of the invention, some of the raw materials used can also be melted separately in order to obtain a glass which acts as a sintering aid and can be used for the production of the spongiosa-like bodies in a particularly advantageous manner. The aforesaid glass is ground and can be added to the slurry consisting of the material according to the invention which has been ground following the melting and cooling processes and then processed into a slurry. The glass melted separately can be added to the slurry in an amount ranging up to 15% by weight relative to the amount of solid matter contained therein, providing, however, that the individual components are not contained in the composition in larger amounts than those indicated in the invention. Such a glass can in particular be produced on the basis of SiO_2 , MgO and Na_2O .

[00032] In this embodiment, the sintering process leads to a very solid structure of the moulded body, whereas parts of the moulded body may crumble away if all

components are melted together and then sintered. The glass melted separately has a grain size D_{50} ranging between 0.7 and 7 μm when being added to the ground material, whose grain size is similar or larger.

[00033] Therefore the present invention also relates to a glass used as a sintering aid for resorbable materials comprising calcium phosphates with the exception of β -TCP, which glass is characterized by the following chemical composition in % by weight:

SiO₂: 73-78, preferably 74-75

MgO: 8-11, preferably 8.5-10

Na₂O: 12-19, preferably 14.5-17

K₂O: 0-22, preferably 0-5

P₂O₅: 0-20, preferably 0-10.

[00034] Another processing option consists in grinding the material, adding commonly used sintering aids and processing the slurry obtained in this way into a sheet which has an open-pore structure once the firing process is finished.

[00035] Advantageously, the material according to the invention can also be provided in combination with a metallic implant surface. The material's coefficient of expansion ranges between 10 and 17 x 10⁻⁶ K⁻¹, measured using a dilatometer (silica glass pushrod dilatometer (*Kieselglas-Schubstangen-Dilatometer*) manufactured by Netzsch Gerätebau GmbH, Germany), so that an adaption to known metals, e.g. chromium-cobalt-molybdenum steels having similar coefficients of expansion, is particular advantageous.

[00036] The present invention also relates to the use of the glassy-crystalline material according to the invention for manufacturing granulated materials, ceramic bodies or ceramic sheets.

[00037] The invention will hereinafter be explained by means of examples. All

percentages are by weight unless indicated otherwise.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1: shows ^{31}P -MAS-NMR spectra of the materials 50-25-25 and 30-50-20 according to the invention, whose composition corresponds to Example 2 and whose phases correspond to Example 5 (MAS = Magic Angle Spinning);

Fig. 2: shows the ^{31}P -MAS-NMR spectrum of β -TCP.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Example 1 (comparative example)

[00038] The following materials were synthesized according to the amounts indicated in the table in % by weight:

Code	CaO	MgO	P ₂ O ₅	Na ₂ O	K ₂ O	SiO ₂
100-0-0	30.67	2.45	43.14	9.42	14.32	0.00
97.5-0-2.5	29.92	2.39	44.53	9.19	13.97	0.00
95-0-5	29.21	2.33	45.85	8.97	13.64	0.00

[00039] The procedure for preparing the materials was as follows:

The mixtures to be melted were weighed in as follows:

Code	CaCO ₃ In g	MgO in g	85% H ₃ PO ₄ in ml	Na ₂ CO ₃ in g	K ₂ CO ₃ in g	SiO ₂ in g
100-0-0	54.74	2.45	41.48	16.11	21.01	0
97.5-0-2.5	53.40	2.39	42.82	15.72	20.50	0
95-0-5	52.13	2.33	44.09	15.34	20.01	0

[00040] First, the components comprising calcium, magnesium, sodium and potassium and optionally silicon, are weighed in. Once the weighing-in process is

finished, each mixture is mixed in a tumbling mixer for one hour. Then the 85% orthophosphoric acid is added to the mixture, the mixture is thoroughly ground in a mortar, stirred and dried at 100°C for one hour, ground in a mortar again and stored once more in a drying chamber at 100°C for one hour. Subsequently, the mixture was once again ground in a mortar, filled into a Pt/Rh crucible and heated up to 400°C, at which temperature it was held for one hour, then heated up to 800°C, at which temperature it was again held for one hour, and then heated up to 1,000°C, at which temperature it was also held for one hour. The sinter cake produced in this way was cooled in air and ground in a mortar again in order to make it more homogeneous. The pretreated mixture was then filled into a platinum crucible and heated up to 1,600°C in a melting furnace. Once the aforesaid temperature had been reached, the melt was maintained at this temperature for half an hour. The low-viscosity, homogeneous melts were then poured onto a steel plate and pressed using a second steel plate so that a salt-like solidified plate was obtained. The crystallization taking place during this stage gives an opaque, white colour to the bodies obtained by the melting process.

[00041] X-ray measurements of the aforesaid samples showed that they contained $\text{Ca}_2\text{K}_{1-x}\text{Na}_{1+x}(\text{PO}_4)_2$ as main crystal phase, which is not included in the subject matter of the present invention but filed as patent application on the same day by the inventors. However, these examples can also be used to demonstrate the positive effect of diphosphate contents (cf. values in Example 5) with regard to solubility (cf. values in Example 4). A higher diphosphate content clearly increased solubility.

Example 2

[00042] Following the same production procedure as described in Example 1, i.e. preparing a mixture of calcium carbonate, sodium carbonate, potassium carbonate and orthophosphoric acid, the following compositions were synthesized according to the amounts indicated in the table in % by weight:

Code	CaO	MgO	P ₂ O ₅	Na ₂ O	K ₂ O	SiO ₂
50-25-25	39.86	1.25	46.82	4.79	7.28	0

60-20-20	37.99	1.49	46.08	5.73	8.71	0
40-30-30	41.74	1	47.58	3.84	5.84	0
80-10-10	34.31	1.97	44.6	7.59	11.53	0
60-30-10	39.05	1.48	45.13	5.69	8.65	0
50-40-10	41.43	1.23	45.39	4.74	7.21	0
50-32.5-17.5	40.65	1.24	46.1	4.77	7.24	0
40-50-10	43.8	0.99	45.65	3.79	5.77	0
40-40-20	42.78	0.99	46.61	3.82	5.8	0
30-50-20	45.16	0.75	46.88	2.86	4.35	0
20-50-30	46.55	0.5	48.11	1.92	2.92	0
30-0-70	40.1	0.73	52.04	2.83	4.3	0
50-0-50	37.4	1.23	49.5	4.71	7.16	0
70-0-30	34.71	1.72	46.96	6.59	10.02	0
50-40-10-Si	41.4	1.3	44.4	10.2	1.7	1

[00043] Low-viscosity melts were obtained for all compositions, which melts spontaneously crystallized when being cooled. The crystallization products had a white colour.

Example 3

[00044] Another manufacturing option consists, inter alia, in that the amount of phosphorus or phosphate may be brought in by means of a calcium carrier, either in part or, as in the present example, in its entirety. The following composition was synthesized according to the amounts indicated in the table in % by weight:

Code	CaO	MgO	P ₂ O ₅	Na ₂ O	K ₂ O	SiO ₂
60-20-20	37.99	1.49	46.08	5.73	8.71	0

[00045] The mixture to be melted was weighed in as follows:

Code	CaCO ₃ in g	MgO in g	85% H ₃ PO ₄ in ml	Na ₂ CO ₃ in g	K ₂ CO ₃ in g	CaHPO ₄ in g
60-20-20	2.82	1.49	0.00	9.80	12.78	88.34

[00046] The mixture to be melted was weighed in according to the amounts indicated above, mixed in a tumbling mixer for one hour, filled into a platinum crucible, placed in a furnace which had been preheated to 400°C and held at this temperature for 16 hours. The crucible was taken out and the furnace was preheated to 600°C, which temperature was maintained for 4 hours, and the furnace was then preheated to 950°C. The crucible was then held in the furnace preheated to 950°C for 6 hours. Subsequently, the sample was heated up to 1,600°C and held at this temperature for half an hour. The low-viscosity, homogeneous melt was then poured onto a steel plate and pressed using a second steel plate so that a salt-like solidified plate was obtained. The crystallization taking place during this stage gives an opaque, white colour to the bodies obtained by the melting process. A discoloration can be observed, depending upon the CaHPO₄ component used and undesirable amounts of iron and/or manganese contained therein.

[00047] It is also possible to directly quench the melt in a water bath once the melting process (1,600°C, 0.5h) is finished (fritting) in order to facilitate the further comminution of the product obtained by the melting process if it is to be further processed in the form of a slurry.

Example 4

[00048] The samples according to Example 1 and selected samples according to Example 2 (see the following table) were used to produce granulated materials having a grain size ranging between 315µm and 400µm in order to determine solubility. The solvent used was 0,2M TRIS-HCl buffer solution with a pH value of 7.4 and at a temperature of 37°C. The analyzed amount was 50mg using 40ml solvent. The granulated materials were stored at 37°C for a period of 120h. Subsequently, the total solubility was determined by

determining the individual ions (of Ca, Mg, P, Na, K) in the solution by means of an ICP measurement:

Code	Solubility [$\mu\text{g}/\text{mg}$]
50-25-25	187 \pm 10
60-20-20	164 \pm 14
40-30-30	160 \pm 15
80-10-10	108 \pm 8
60-30-10	123 \pm 11
50-40-10	123 \pm 7
50-32.5-17.5	127 \pm 22
40-50-10	105 \pm 16
40-40-20	152 \pm 4
30-50-20	121 \pm 14
20-50-30	78 \pm 4
100-0-0	95 \pm 8
97.5-0-2.5	134 \pm 16
95-0-5	221 \pm 22

[00049] Surprisingly, the compositions according to Example 2 have impressively high solubility values compared to the compositions according to Example 1 although the sum of the alkaline constituents, i.e. relative to sodium oxide and potassium oxide, is much smaller in the compositions according to Example 2.

Example 5

[00050] ^{31}P -MAS-NMR spectra of the samples according to Example 1 and selected samples according to Example 2 were recorded with a waiting time of 120s between the individual pulses. The samples rotated at a speed of 12.5kHz.

[00051] The quantitative composition of the samples as regards their phosphate

content is indicated in the following table:

Code	Orthophosphate content [(PO ₄) ³⁻] in %	Diphosphate content [(P ₂ O ₇) ²⁻] in %	Chain phosphate content [predominantly (PO ₃) ¹⁻] in %
50-40-10	92.5	7.5	-
50-32.5-17	93	7	-
50-25-25	86	14	-
40-50-10	91	9	-
40-40-20	84	16	-
40-30-30	82.5	13	4.5
30-50-20	88	9	3
20-50-30	73	27	-
60-20-20	92	8	-
100-0-0	99.5-96	0.5-4	-
97.5-0-2.5	88	12	-
95-0-5	79	21	-

[00052] The range indicated for the composition 100-0-0 is based on the analysis of three batches one of which was synthesized according to the manufacturing method described in Example 3, whereas only one sample was analysed for each of the other compositions.

Example 6

[00053] In the zirconium oxide bowl (250ml) of a planetary mill, the products obtained by the melting process having a composition according to codes 30-50-20, 40-30-30 and 60-20-20 and a composition GB9/1 according to Biomaterials 16 (1995)1241-1248 were ground under the same conditions (two times for 20min). The results are shown in the following table according to which the compositions according

to the invention yield smaller grain size fractions under the same grinding conditions:

Code	D ₅₀ value [in μm]
30-50-20	4.21
40-30-30	3.98
60-20-20	3.67
GB9/1	6.50

Example 7

[00054] The ground 30-50-20 sample according to Example 6 is to be processed into "scaffolds". For this purpose, a slurry was produced by combining 100g of the ground material with 45g of a mixture consisting of 90% polyethylene glycol and 10% of a commercially available surface-active agent and adding 5ml isopropyl alcohol. The slurry obtained in this way is applied onto open-pore PUR sponges whose porosity ranges between 80 and 20ppi (pores per inch) by repeatedly immersing and squeezing the sponges, dried overnight in a drying chamber at 120°C and then slowly heated up to 1,000°C at a rate of 10°C per minute. The result is a spongiosa-like material the structure of which resembles that of the sponge used, while the PUR sponge has burnt completely.

Example 8

[00055] The ground 60-20-20 sample according to Example 6 is to be processed into "scaffolds". This was done according to the method described in Example 7. The result was not completely satisfying as the sample obtained in Example 7 obviously had a more solid structure. In order to compensate for this deficiency, 3% by weight of a previously produced glass having a chemical composition of (in % by weight) 74.97 SiO₂, 9.22 MgO and 15.81 Na₂O (melted as 27.04 Na₂CO₃) and a D₅₀ value of 6.56 μm was added to the ground material according to 60-20-20 as a sintering aid. Then a slurry was produced by combining 100g of this powder mixture with 45g of a mixture consisting of 90% polyethylene glycol and 10% of a commercially available surface-active agent and adding 5ml isopropyl alcohol. The slurry obtained in this way is applied onto

open-pore PUR sponges whose porosity ranges between 80 and 20ppi (pores per inch) by repeatedly immersing and squeezing the sponges, dried overnight in a drying chamber at 120°C and then slowly heated up to 1,000°C at a rate of 10°C per minute. The result is a spongiosa-like material the structure of which resembles that of the sponge used, while the PUR sponge has burnt completely.

Example 9

[00056] Samples were prepared according to Example 2 and selected samples thereof were analysed using ^{31}P -NMR measurements. The ^{31}P -MAS-NMR spectra were recorded with a waiting time of 120s between the individual pulses. The samples rotated at a speed of 12.5kHz.

[00057] As a result, it can be shown that the samples according to the invention, e.g. the 50-25-25 and 30-50-20 samples (cf. Fig. 1), in their majority do not contain β -TCP unlike a certified reference sample consisting of β -TCP (Clarkson Chromatography Products, Inc., South Williamsport, PA, USA) (cf. Fig. 2), but can be allocated to the $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ or $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ crystal phases according to the invention. It cannot be ruled out, but is rather probable instead, that possibly there are also mixed crystal phases in between the two crystal phases $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ and $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$. This is a scientific problem to be clarified in the future and has no influence whatsoever on the manufacture and use of the material according to the invention.

[00058] In Fig. 1, the left peak indicates Q_0 -groups and the right, higher peak Q_1 -groups.

[00059] The main phases according to the invention, i.e. $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ or $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ or Na-K ratios in between, could be clearly identified detecting Q_0 -groups by means of NMR analyses. A clear allocation was possible even in those cases in which $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{Na}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ or $\text{Ca}_{10}\text{K}(\text{PO}_4)_7$ make up the main phases and β -TCP occurs as a constituent of a secondary phase.

Example 10

[00060] Material composed according to code 30-50-20 was freshly ground, 1g of a grain size fraction $<45\mu\text{m}$ was added into 100ml E-pure water, and the pH value was determined after 1min and after 72h. The result was 9.71 after one minute and 8.3 after 72 hours, i.e. a clear change towards physiological conditions could be observed.

Example 11

[00061] In order to enhance this effect a priori, the following experiment was carried out: A spongiosa-like body was produced according to Example 7, i.e. the composition according to code 30-50-20 was applied onto a PUR sponge and sintered, except that the sponge used in the present example had a porosity of 45ppi.

[00062] The moulded body obtained in this way, whose outer dimensions were approx. 12mm x 10mm x 6mm, was immersed in 100ml E-pure water and the pH value was measured after 10min. The measured value was 8.25.

[00063] Subsequently, the moulded body was eluted in E-pure water at 60°C and a pressure of 3 bars for one hour. The moulded body was then rinsed 5 times in 20ml fresh E-pure water, immersed in 100ml E-pure water again, and pH values of 7.84 and 7.86 were measured after 1 hour and 4 hours respectively.

[00064] This demonstrates that the pretreatment of spongiosa-like bodies described above is a useful activity as products pretreated in this way have a lower basicity, which can be advantageous both for implantation in vivo and for tissue engineering ex vivo or in vitro.

Example 12

[00065] An important feature with regard to the coating of materials with the resorbable materials according to the invention consists in that the thermal coefficient of expansion can be varied, bearing in mind e.g. that this coefficient is approx. $8 \cdot 10^{-6} \text{ K}^{-1}$

for titanium implants and approx. $14-16 \cdot 10^{-6} \text{ K}^{-1}$ for Co-Cr-Mo steels (depending upon the constituents of the alloy). In order to obtain a composite material which is optimally suited to its intended use, the temperature range in which the material is applied onto the metallic substrate must be carefully selected as in this way the substrate can be subjected to compressive strain in a targeted manner during the coating process thus obtaining a composite material which in general is regarded as mechanically more stable.

[00066] The following table shows some of the possible variations:

Sample	CE ₃₀₋₁₀₀ (10^{-6} K^{-1})	CE ₃₀₋₂₀₀ (10^{-6} K^{-1})	CE ₃₀₋₃₀₀ (10^{-6} K^{-1})
40-30-30	13.45	14.85	16.35
60-20-20	11.09	12.32	13.43
40-40-20	13.24	14.04	14.95
30-50-20	12.12	13.14	14.46
50-25-25	12.22	12.65	14.14

[00067] In the table, CE₃₀₋₁₀₀ is the coefficient of expansion between 30 and 100°C, CE₃₀₋₂₀₀ is the coefficient of expansion between 30 and 200°C, and CE₃₀₋₃₀₀ is the coefficient of expansion between 30 and 300°C.